

Remarks

In response to the Office Action mailed on August 20, 2004, Applicants sincerely request reconsideration in view of the above claim amendments and the following remarks. The claims as presented are believed to be in allowable condition.

In the above-referenced claim amendments, claims 1, 4, 16, 26, and 28 have been amended. Claims 3 and 29 has been canceled. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the string of text is received after it has been entered into the electronic document and to clarify the features of canceled claim 3 which specify that the list of actions is provided in response to a user selecting a dropdown menu associated with the label. Claim 16 has been amended to clarify that the plurality of items are already entered in the electronic document prior to being identified. Claim 26 has been amended to clarify that the strings tracked by the recognizer module are previously entered in a user's electronic document. Claim 28 has been amended to incorporate the features of canceled claim 29. Support for these amendments may be found on page 12, lines 14-20 and on page 28, lines 26-30 in the Specification of the co-pending application bearing serial number 09/488,411 (filed on 6/6/2000 and incorporated in the present application by reference). No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-31 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 1-5, 16-18, and 23-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beauregard et al. (U.S. Patent 5,974,413, hereinafter "Beauregard") in view of Perkowski (U.S. Patent 6,625,581). Claims 6-15 and 19-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beauregard in view of Perkowski and Jovicic et al. (U.S. Patent 5,855,007, hereinafter "Jovicic"). It should be noted that although paragraph 5 of the

Office Action identifies claim 6 as being rejected over Beauregard in view of Perkowski only, the rejection of this claim is actually discussed as being rejected over Beauregard in view of Perkowski and Jovicic (See paragraph 6). Therefore, the rejection of claim 6 will be discussed below with respect to Beauregard, Perkowski, and Jovicic. The rejections of the remaining claims will also be addressed below.

Claim Rejections—35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-5, 16-18, and 23-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beauregard in view of Perkowski. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Beauregard discloses a semantic user interface (SUI) from which a user is enabled to enter "action words" to control the operations of a computer. An action word may be either a single word or a phrase that includes two or more words. In the SUI, each action word is compared against the contents of a wordbase. The wordbase includes a plurality of item records. Each item record includes an action word and an associated service script for performing various actions such as issuing a command to launch an application. If the action word is located in the wordbase, the service script associated with the action word is executed. See Col. 5, lines 12-52. The SUI of Beauregard detects the keystrokes, which may make up action words, as they are being entered. If the keystrokes correspond to an action word, the service script associated with the action word is retrieved. The system then erases the action word from the user's input text before executing the related service script. See Fig. 7 and Col. 36, lines 2-25.

Amended independent claim 1 specifies a computer-implemented method for providing electronic commerce actions. The method includes receiving, in a recognizer

plug-in, a string of text of the electronic document after the entire string of text has been entered in the electronic document and annotating the string of text to determine whether the string includes any of a plurality of predetermined strings in the recognizer plug-in. If the string of text includes any of the plurality of predetermined string in the recognizer plug-in, then labeling the string of text in the electronic document with a label, and providing a list of actions that may be performed to purchase a product associated with the string of text, wherein the list of actions is provided in response to a user selecting a dropdown menu associated with the label.

Beauregard fails to disclose a method which teaches, discloses, or suggests receiving a string of text in a recognizer plug-in after the entire string of text has been entered in an electronic document and providing a list of actions that may be performed to purchase a product associated with the string of text, wherein the list of actions is provided in response to a user selecting a dropdown menu associated with the label, as recited in amended independent claim 1. As noted above, Beauregard teaches receiving keystrokes as they are being entered by a user. Keystrokes corresponding to action words result in the automatic retrieval of a service script and the action words are erased from the system prior to the executing the script.

Beauregard however, fails to teach recognizing a string of text after the entire string of text has been entered in the electronic document. Thus, while Beauregard is limited to detecting keystrokes making up an action word, the invention as embodied in claim 1 specifies the recognition of a string of text (which may comprise one or more words) after the string has been entered in a document. Furthermore, Beauregard teaches an automated system for retrieving a script upon detecting an action word and then

executing the script. This functionality is distinguished from claim 1 which specifies providing a list of actions in response to a user selecting a dropdown menu. Thus, while Beauregard is limited to predetermined actions for detected "action words," the invention as embodied in claim 1 enables a user to initiate the providing of a list of actions from a menu for execution.

Perkowski, relied upon in the Office Action to cure the deficiencies of Beauregard, is alleged to teach providing a set of information actions related to a product identified by a user (Fig. 4, Fig. 6, Col. 4 line 36 – Col. 12 line 63) as well as teaching an applet providing a set of actions related to an identified product to enable a user to purchase a related product (Abstract and Col. 7, lines 12-17). Perkowski, however, fails to teach, disclose, or suggest receiving a string of text in a recognizer plug-in after the entire string of text has been entered in an electronic document and determining whether the string includes any of a plurality of predetermined strings in the recognizer plug-in, wherein the plurality of determined strings is based at least on the context of the string of text in the electronic document, as recited in amended independent claim 1. For example, there is no teaching, disclosure, or suggestion in Perkowski of the recognition of text strings in an electronic document. Rather, Perkowski is limited to providing a set of information actions related to a user-identified product.

Since neither Beauregard nor Perkowski, alone or in combination, teaches, discloses, or suggests the aforementioned features of specified in amended independent claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that this claim is allowable and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn for at least the aforementioned reasons. Dependent claims 2-5 each depend from amended independent claim 1 and thus specify at least the

same features as amended independent claim 1. Therefore, dependent claims 2-5 are also allowable for at least the reasons given above and the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should also be withdrawn.

Amended independent claims 16 and 26 specify similar features as amended independent claim 1. Specifically, claims 16 and 26 specify identifying a plurality of items in an electronic document wherein the plurality of items are already entered in the electronic document prior to being identified and tracking, in a recognizer module on a user's computer, all of the strings previously entered in a user's electronic document that match strings in a recognizer database. As discussed above with respect to amended independent claim 1, neither Beauregard nor Perkowksi, alone or in combination, teaches, discloses, or suggests the aforementioned features. Therefore, amended independent claims 16 and 26 are allowable and the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Dependent claims 17-18 depend from amended independent claim 16 and thus specify at least the same features. Similarly, dependent claim 27 depends from amended independent claim 16 thus specifies at least the same features. Therefore, dependent claims 17-18 and 27 are also allowable for the reasons given above and the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should also be withdrawn.

Independent claim 23 discloses a computer-implemented method for providing electronic commerce actions. The method includes receiving, in a recognizer plug-in, a string of text of the electronic document, annotating the string of text to determine whether the string includes any of a plurality of predetermined strings in the recognizer plug-in, wherein the predetermined strings are a plurality of strings associated with

shopping, if so, then labeling the string of text in the electronic document with a label, and providing a list of actions that may be performed to navigate to a retailer's website associated with the string of text.

Neither Beauregard nor Perkowski, alone or in combination, teaches, discloses, or suggests the aforementioned features. In particular, neither Beauregard nor Perkowski teaches providing a list of actions that may be performed to navigate to a retailer's website associated with a string of text. In the Office Action, a URL list of product associated websites taught by Perkowski (Fig. 4 and Col. 4 line 36-col. 12 line 63) is alleged to teach the list of actions disclosed in claim 23. However, the specification of the present application makes clear that an "action" is not a hyperlink or a URL (see page 19, lines 19-28 through page 21, line 1). Specifically, this section of the Specification discusses hyperlinks and URLs are static while the actions in illustrative embodiments of the present invention are dynamic. For example, actions in illustrative embodiments of the present invention (such as claim 23) can perform arbitrary computation in addition to performing navigation within a web browser.

Since, based on the above discussion, neither Beauregard nor Perkowski teaches providing a list of actions that may be performed to navigate to a retailer's website associated with a string of text, independent claim 23 is allowable and the rejection of this claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 24-25 depend from amended independent claim 23 and thus specify at least the same features. Therefore, dependent claims 24-25 are also allowable for the reasons given above and the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should also be withdrawn. Independent claim 27 specifies similar features as independent claim 23. Specifically,

claim 23 specifies providing a list of actions in association with a recognized product string. As discussed above with respect to claim 23, neither Beauregard nor Perkowksi, alone or in combination, teaches, discloses, or suggests this feature. Therefore, claim 27 is allowable and the rejection of this claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Independent claim 28 discloses a computer-implemented method for recognizing a product string in an electronic document. The method includes, in a recognizer program module, determining whether a product string in the electronic document matches at least one string in a recognizer database, and if so, then labeling the product string with a semantic category, wherein the semantic category comprises a type label and a globally unique product identifier (GUID), wherein the GUID uniquely identifies the recognition event of the product string.

Neither Beauregard nor Perkowski, alone or in combination, teaches, discloses, or suggests a globally unique product identifier (GUID), wherein the GUID uniquely identifies a recognition event of a product string, as disclosed in independent claim 28. In the Office Action, Perkowski (in the Abstract) is alleged to teach pairing an electronic-commerce product with a globally unique product identifier. However, even if this teaching of Perkowski is combined with Beauregard, neither reference teaches or suggests a GUID which uniquely identifies a recognition event of a product string. Specifically, as disclosed in independent claim 28, a product string in an electronic document is “recognized” (i.e., a recognition event occurs) if the string matches at least one string in a recognizer database. Once this match occurs, the product string is labeled with a semantic category which includes a type label and a GUID for identifying that the

product string was recognized. Thus, while the GUID of Perkowski is associated with a product, the GUID of claim 28 is associated with the recognition of a product string in an electronic document.

Accordingly, based on the discussion above, independent claim 28 is allowable and the rejection of this claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn. Dependent claims 30-31 depend from independent claim 28 and thus specify at least the same features. Therefore, dependent claims 30-31 are also allowable for the reasons given above and the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should also be withdrawn.

Claims 6-15 and 19-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Beauregard in view of Perkowski and Jovicic. Claims 6-11 depend from amended independent claim 1 and thus specify at least the same features. Jovicic, relied upon in the Office Action to cure the deficiencies of Beauregard and Perkowski, is alleged to teach transmitting the identifier of a user to a web site so that the web site may generate and transmit customized information (Fig. 4 and Col. 7 line 56-Col. 8 line 17). Jovicic is also alleged to teach providing a discount offer to a user in response to identifying the user (Fig. 4 and Col. 7 line 56 – Col. 8 line 17) and that the use of coupons attracts consumers to a merchant's store (Col. 1 lines 12-20). Jovicic is also alleged to teach that the coupon comprises an identification, discount value, and a begin and end date (Fig. 3 and Col. 6 line 49 – Col. 7 line 40). Jovicic is also alleged to teach rewarding an identified visiting user with a discount offer (Fig. 4 and Col. 7 line 56 – Col. 8 line 17). Jovicic is also alleged to teach providing a product to a user via e-mail (Fig. 4, Col. 7 line 56 – Col. 8 line 17).

Jovicic, however, like Beauregard and Perkowski, fails to teach, disclose, or suggest receiving a string of text in a recognizer plug-in after the entire string of text has been entered in an electronic document and providing a list of actions that may be performed to purchase a product associated with the string of text, wherein the list of actions is provided in response to a user selecting a dropdown menu associated with the label, as disclosed in dependent claims 6-11. Since neither Beauregard, Perkowski, nor Jovicic, alone or in combination, teaches, discloses, or suggests the aforementioned features specified in dependent claims 6-11, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn for at least the aforementioned reasons.

Independent claim 12 discloses a method for providing an electronic coupon to a user of an electronic document. The method includes using a recognizer module to determine a number of strings in a database that match at least one string in the electronic document, labeling the matched strings in the electronic document and providing a plurality of actions in association with the recognized strings, determining whether the number of recognized strings exceeds a predetermined minimum, and if so, then providing a coupon as one of the plurality of actions.

In the Office Action, it is alleged that the combination of Beauregard, Perkowski, and Jovicic teaches the aforementioned features. In particular, it is alleged that Perkowski teaches providing a set of information actions related to a product identified by a user (Emphasis supplied). However, it is respectfully submitted that this feature is not present in independent claim 12. On the contrary, claim 12 specifies that a recognizer module (i.e., not a user) determines matched strings (such as product information) in an

electronic document and determines whether the number of recognized (or matched) strings exceeds a predetermined minimum. As discussed above, neither Beauregard nor Perkowski teaches, discloses, or suggests these features. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 12 is allowable and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn for at least the aforementioned reasons. Dependent claim 13 depends from independent claim 12 and thus specifies at least the same features. Therefore, dependent claim 13 is also allowable for the reasons given above and the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should also be withdrawn.

Independent claim 14 discloses a method for providing an affiliate program for electronic commerce, wherein a user is rewarded for referring business to a website. The method includes using a recognizer module to determine in an electronic document strings that match at least one string in a database, and applying a semantic category to each of the matched strings in the electronic document, wherein the semantic category comprises a type label identifying the type of the matched string and an affiliate number identification, wherein the affiliate number identification is associated with the user of the electronic document.

It is respectfully submitted that the combination of Beauregard, Perkowski, and Jovicic fails to teach, disclose, or suggest applying a semantic category to matched strings in an electronic document, wherein the semantic category comprises a type label identifying the type of the matched string and an affiliate number identification associated with the user of the electronic document, as disclosed in independent claim 14. In the Office Action, Perkowski is alleged to teach storing identifications of consumer products in a database to point to related informational items (Fig. 4, Fig. 6, Col. 5 line 36

- Col. 12 line 63). However, even if this teaching of Perkowski is combined with Beauregard, and Jovicic, the combination of these references fails to teach, disclose, or suggest an affiliate number identification associated with the user of the electronic document.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 14 is allowable and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn for at least the aforementioned reasons. Dependent claim 15 depends from independent claim 14 and thus specifies at least the same features as amended independent claim 14. Therefore, dependent claim 15 is also allowable for at least the reasons given above and the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should also be withdrawn.

Independent claim 19 discloses a method for using a recommendation e-mail from an e-commerce retailer to a computer. The method includes receiving an e-mail from the retailer, wherein the e-mail comprises a product name of a product for sale by the retailer, cross-referencing the product name with a type label database to determine whether the product name matches at least one entry in the type label database, if so, then labeling the product name with a type label, cross-referencing the type label with a plurality of actions to determine which actions match the type label, and listing the matching actions in association with the product name to provide a user of the computer with a number of different actions.

It is respectfully submitted that the combination of Beauregard, Perkowski, nor Jovicic, does not teach, disclose, or suggest the above referenced features. In particular, as discussed above with respect to amended independent claim 1, Beauregard requires receiving keystrokes as they are being entered by a user in order to determine action

words which result in the retrieval of a service script. As discussed above, independent claim 19 specifies determining product name matches from a received e-mail from a retailer. Thus, the text strings making up the product names have already been entered into the electronic document (i.e., the e-mail message) prior to the step of recognizing product names, thus enabling the recognition of text strings in previously created electronic documents. As discussed above, Beauregard fails to teach this feature. Furthermore, as discussed above, neither Perkowski nor Jovicic teach, disclose, or suggest this feature. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 19 is allowable and the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn for at least the aforementioned reasons.

Dependent claims 20-21 each depend from independent claim 19 and thus specify at least the same features as amended independent claim 19. Therefore, dependent claims 20-21 are also allowable for at least the reasons given above and the rejections of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should also be withdrawn. Independent claim 22 specifies similar features as independent claim 19. Specifically, independent claim 22 specifies receiving an e-mail from a retailer, wherein the e-mail comprises a product name of a product for sale by the retailer and a type label associated with the product name, cross-referencing the type label with a plurality of actions to determine which actions match the type label, and listing the matching actions in association with the product name to provide a user of the computer with a number of different actions. As discussed above with respect to independent claim 19, the combination of Beauregard, Perkowski, and Jovicic fails to teach, disclose, or suggest the aforementioned features.

Therefore, independent claim 19 is allowable and the rejection of this claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is now in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to call the Applicants' attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD



Date: February 22, 2005

Alton Hornsby, III

Reg. No. 47,299

Merchant & Gould, LLC
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
Telephone: 404.954.5100

